

LIFE OF DAVID STUDY

STUDY NO 33 - FAITH BRINGS GREAT VICTORY

1 SAMUEL 30

V6 FOR THE PEOPLE SPAKE OF STONING HIM

If David's men had stoned him and killed him, what would it have done for them? But while David's men were concentrating on him, David's mind turned to Yahweh, his God (see earlier notes on this verse page 127).

V8 AND DAVID ENQUIRED AT YAHWEH

This is what he should have done back in 1 Samuel 27:1. But David is now back on track, as it were. The Psalmist gives expression to what would have been Yahweh's attitude to David in his spiritually renewed state of mind - "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I **deliver him**: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I **will be with him in trouble**; I **will deliver him**, and honour him' (Psa 91:14-15). Psalm 91 is a messianic Psalm, verses 11 and 12 being quoted as applying to the Lord in Matthew 4:6.

PURSUE: FOR THOU SHALT SURELY OVERTAKE THEM, AND WITHOUT FAIL RECOVER ALL

From a human point of view this seemed impossible, because the area into which the Amalekites had gone was a desert area. It would have been like looking for a needle in a haystack. But David is prepared to set out in faith, and his men with him, as verse 9 shows. Here we have an example of faith AND works - it is faith in action. For ourselves the desert types the world about us. We must make our way through that desert on the way to the Kingdom. Like David we must commit our way to Yahweh and go forth in faith. We must follow the road despite the difficulties and problems and disappointments of the way.

V9 AND THE SIX HUNDRED MEN THAT WERE WITH HIM

Immediately before this, these six hundred men were contemplating stoning David to death (verse 6). So there is something missing from the narrative. What has brought about the change in these men? It appears that after David enquired of Yahweh and got the reply that he did (verse 8), he must have exhorted his men mightily. Whatever he said to them changed them back to being the faithful followers that they were before. David was able to turn them around by the words of the Spirit. He was able to rekindle the spirit of the Truth in them. David had previously so instructed his men, that they had a spiritual capacity which could be appealed to, and which caused them to heed David's exhortation. David's attitude to instructing his men is seen in such passages as Psalm 34:11 "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of Yahweh." David with his men united with him, is a type of a sound ecclesia united with its head (the Lord Jesus Christ) - an ecclesia in which brethren and sisters are well grounded in the principles of the Truth, and who rally to sound exhortation, because they are responsive to the Spirit-word.

AND CAME TO THE BROOK BESOR

The exact site of Besor is unknown, but certainly it lay south of Ziklag.

V10 HE AND FOUR HUNDRED MEN

This is not telling us that two hundred were unfaithful (compare six hundred men - verse 9). Not everyone can keep up at exactly the same pace in the Truth, and we have to bear this in mind in our dealings with our brethren and sisters. Unquestionably all six hundred were united in spirit and in the objective of this pursuit. However, they had just marched from Apek to Ziklag, and now David had set a cracking pace as he marched south from Ziklag in pursuit of the Amalekites.

COULD NOT GO OVER THE BROOK BESOR

The word "brook" is from the Hebrew *nachalah* meaning "a stream especially a winter torrent" (Strong 5158). Such streams while dry in summer often become a rushing torrent in winter, and today in the Negev there are signs warning tourists to beware of flash floods. So it would seem that this pursuit took place in winter, and that Besor was flowing so rapidly at the time, that it was too much for two hundred of David's men to cope with. From verse 24 we learn that David had lightened his load as much as possible - he left "the stuff" with the two hundred men. We are reminded here of Gideon's pursuit of the Midianites: he and his three hundred men were faint, yet pursuing as they crossed Jordan (Judges 8:4). The Apostle Paul reveals his own experiences in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 - "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed". Paul's motivation is revealed in 2 Corinthians 4:1 - "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not (i.e. we do not loose heart)". The "ministry" was the commission Paul was called on to pursue.

V11 THEY FOUND AN EGYPTIAN IN THE FIELD

To find this Egyptian in the midst of the Negev was surprising. Here was the hand of Providence at work again. God went with them. And God will go with us as long as we pursue the goal that will take us to the Kingdom.

AND GAVE HIM BREAD....AND THEY MADE HIM DRINK WATER

This Egyptian had been left to die three days earlier (verse 12).

V12 THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS

It is from this, and the words at the end of verse 13, that we learn that the Amalekites had a three day start on David as they retreated into the Negev, having burned Ziklag with fire. But David pursues them nonetheless. From this we learn that in the warfare of faith, there must be no giving up, even though from a human point of view, the position may seem hopeless.

V13 BECAUSE THREE DAYS AGONE I FELL SICK

"Sick" is from the Hebrew *chalah* meaning to be rubbed or worn; hence figuratively to be weak, sick, afflicted (Strong 2470). It appears that this young Egyptian was not suffering serious sickness, but rather faintness and weakness. So a cruel Amalekite master, had abandoned his slave in this state, to die in the Negev. But how sweet are the ways of Providence. This Amalekite's lack of compassion towards his slave, led to their undoing. It also appears that in caring for this Egyptian that they "found", that David was obeying the law of Deuteronomy 10:19 "Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." The lesson is that we must do for others what Yahweh has done for us.

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V14 WE MADE AN INVASION

Note that this Egyptian does not say "they" but "we". By using "we" he is confessing his part in the invasion, and the plundering, and burning that took place at Ziklag.

CHERETHITES

The Cherethites were Philistine tribes which dwelt south of Caleb. They were still there in the days of Zephaniah (Zeph 2:5).

AND WE BURNED ZIKLAG WITH FIRE

Notice that it is only Ziklag that they burned with fire. This was a special pay-back for David - see note on 1 Samuel 30:1 - page 125).

V15 CANST THOU BRING ME DOWN TO THIS COMPANY?

David is quick to see the hand of Providence in this matter. Without "finding" this Egyptian they could have spent weeks or months trying to locate the Amalekites in the Negev.

THOU WILT NEITHER KILL ME, NOT DELIVER ME INTO THE HANDS OF MY MASTER

The Egyptian sets two conditions on his willingness to help. Firstly that his life might be spared. And secondly, that under no circumstances was he to be returned to his master who had so callously cast him off. By contrast we can't see our absent Master quickly enough. Our problems in life will be over if only he can be received into the hands of our Master.

V16 VERSE 16

Jer B "And when he led him down there they were, scattered over the whole countryside, eating, drinking and rejoicing, because of the enormous booty they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah." This young Egyptian must have known of the Amalekites' plans. And when David and his men turn up, they are taken completely by surprise, which is always the best strategy in dealing with the enemy.

V17 AND DAVID SMOTE THEM FROM THE TWILIGHT EVEN UNTO THE EVENING OF THE NEXT DAY

Roth "And David smote them, from the closing twilight even unto the evening of the next day". So it seems that David attacked the enemy as night was about to fall. They were well fed and drunk, and probably were in need of sleep. So in the darkness, and in their inebriated state, they would not have been aware they were being attacked by only four hundred men. Like Gideon, David and his men were faint but pursuing (Judges 8:4). Probably in the confusion caused by the surprise attack, the darkness, and their inebriation, the Amalekites would largely have destroyed themselves. The mind of David on such occasions is expressed in Psalm 118:6 "Yahweh is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"; and Psalm 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

V19 THERE WAS NOTHING LACKING TO THEM

David was like Abraham who not only won the battle against the five kings of nations, but "he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people" (Gen 14:16). Through faith, men like Abraham, Gideon and David "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of

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weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens (Heb 11:33-34).

V20 THE FLOCKS AND HERDS WHICH THEY DRAVE

Jer B "They captured the flocks and herds as well and drove them in front of him." The "they" are David's excited and joyous men. David was placed in a position of honour in the eyes of his men.

THOSE OTHER CATTLE

The principle is found in Mark 10:29-30 "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

THIS IS DAVID'S SPOIL

Jer B ""This is David's booty" they shouted". David's response brought its reward. So far as we are concerned, we need to recognise that in the Truth we have riches which can't be measured in material terms.

V21 THE TWO HUNDRED MEN, WHICH WERE SO FAINT...WENT FORTH TO MEET DAVID

There was no attitude of sheepishness or guilt on the part of the two hundred because they had been physically unable to take part in the battle. They were overjoyed to see David. Roth "When David came near to the people they enquired of his success". They were all part of the one brotherhood. They all had one aim.

V22 THEN ANSWERED ALL THE WICKED MEN OF BELIAL

Belial was a man who was "without profit". [His name is derived from the Hebrew *beliyaal* meaning without profit, worthless (Strong 1100)]. Without David's guidance these men were going to undo all that David had achieved. A vocal misguided minority can upset any ecclesia if they are so minded. To David horror they say "We will not give them of any of the spoil we have recovered." This vocal minority had totally forgotten that it was Yahweh that had given them the victory. Yahweh had given them all, and could just as easily take it all away again. The principle is set out in Proverbs 3:6 "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

YE SHALL NOT DO SO, MY BRETHREN, WITH THAT WHICH YAHWEH HATH GIVEN US

David takes into account the human physical weakness (not sin) of the two hundred who could not go with them into the battle.

V24 THEY SHALL PART ALIKE

Jer B "they shall share alike". This bickering among David's men reminds us of the attitude of the disciples in Luke 22:24 - "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." The Lord's response was to say to them "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger" and "He that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk 22:26).

